CJ1216 - El Salvador Apaneca Santa Leticia Raised Bed Natural Pacamara Crown Jewel

July 25th, 2018 | See This Coffee Online Here

Intro by Chris Kornman

This delightful natural Pacamara from Finca Santa Leticia in El Salvador does a really nice job of highlighting the absolute best in cultivar selection and processing. It's juicy, brimming with ripe red fruits like pomegranate, raspberry, and red grape. It's not scared of a little nuance, either, with hints of floral and light pear accents. You won't find it too heavy on the herbal or berry notes, though at the right roast level a light Pacamara savory quality is definitely present - more like the opening act than the headliner, though.

Ricardo Valdivieso, a fourth-generation coffee farmer, and his family are responsible for producing some pretty fun coffees for us over the years, like this wild and wonderful dry processed Pacamara. The coffee was harvested on the Santa Leticia finca, which, along with its sibling farm Las Ninfas, are both full of productive coffee trees and brimming with beauty.

Passed down through the family, the farms were originally founded in 1870 by noted statesman Francisco Menéndez Valdevieso, a native of the region, a general, provisional president of the country, as well as the founder of El Salvador's educational system. Ricardo is his great-grandson. In addition to coffee and preserved forest, the farms contain archaeological ruins from the Mayan era and Ricardo's daughter Monica runs an eco-tourist lodge on Santa Leticia.

The farms are located near the town of Apaneca, due east of El Salvador's major coffee landmark, Volcán de Santa Ana, also known as Ilamatepec. The mountainous region that spans the north and east of the country's highest still-active volcanic peak is ideal in climate for coffee cultivation. Volcanic soil, steady Pacific breeze, sufficient elevation, and a clear division between rainy and dry seasons make for a fertile environment that is also lush with native forests.

Grower:	Ricardo Valdivieso and family, Finca Santa Leticia	**Process:**	"Natural" dried in the fruit on raised beds in the sun
Region:	Apaneca, Ahuachapán, El Salvador	**Cultivar:**	Pacamara
Altitude:	1620 - 1730 masl	**Harvest:**	November 2017 - March 2018

Green Analysis by Chris Kornman

Clearly, the hallmark of this delightful dry processed Pacamara is its large size, about 75% screen 18 or larger. The resulting average density is no surprise, and the moderate looking moisture content with very

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slightly above average water activity round out the physical specs. A solid option that should have some longevity to its flavor given the right storage and roasting conditions.

Pacamara is a distinctly Salvadoran variety, released in the 1970s but worked on for more than 30 years prior to that at the Genetic Department of the Salvadoran Institute for Coffee Research (ISIC). Despite only accounting for about 0.22% of El Salvador's coffee plants, Pacamara has developed a cult following among specialty roasters. Interestingly, the quality report that accompanied its release recommended processing it as a Natural for best results.

Pacamara's genetic lineage comes from two naturally occurring variations, called Pacas and Maragogype, branching off Arabica's two most common heirloom cultivars. Pacas, a dwarf Bourbon, was discovered by the Pacas family in the Santa Ana volcanic region within El Salvador, while Maragogype is a Typica mutation, first discovered in Brazil's mountainous Bahia region. The large size of the beans, for which Pacamara is famous, are inherited from Maragogype.

Screen Size	Percent
>19	48.12%
18	24.78%
17	16.24%
16	9.50%
15	1.10%
14	0.17%
≤13	0.08%

Density (freely settled)

0.679 g/mL

Total Moisture Content

11.1% (Sinar)
10.5% (Kett)

Water Activity

0.59 @ 23.5C

Ikawa Analysis by Jen Apodaca

Pacamaras are very large, and there was no doubt in my mind that this coffee would need a little extra Maillard time to make sure it fully develops internally. For this reason, I decided to use my Long Maillard (LM) profiles for the Ikawa. It is not often that we get to roast a pacamara natural and this one has average moisture and a relatively high water activity. All of these indicate that a longer roast time will be needed. In Ikawa Roast (1) this was most certainly the case because we never reached first crack. Ikawa Roast (2) was exactly the same profile with 15 seconds added on to the end of the roast, which was enough time to reach first crack and give us 28 seconds of post crack development time.

On the cupping table I was surprised to find that Ikawa Roast (1) did not have a lot of underdeveloped flavors. It was very tart and citric which showcased a lot of nice potential. Ikawa Roast (2) was much more balanced and juicy. Pomegranate, grape with lime zest made for a delightfully sweet cup.

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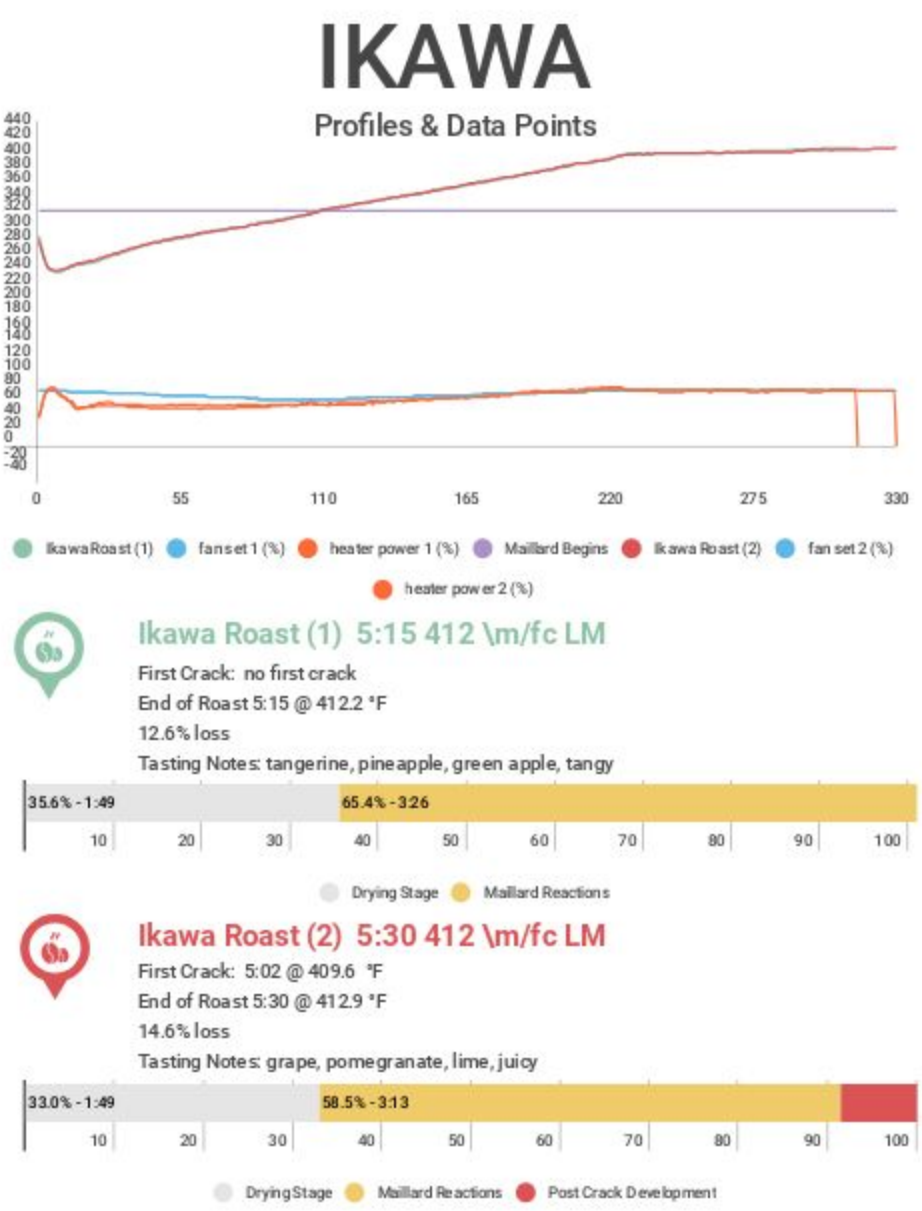

Probatino Analysis by Jen Apodaca

In the hot drum of the my 1 kilo Probatino roaster, it can be a challenge to roast lower density coffees because of the amount of power the gas flame has. Knowing this I wanted to have a lower charge temperature, but not unreasonably low that it would halt or slow production. I waited 5 minutes after the first roast for the machine to cool off and as always, and started the roast at my lowest setting of 2 gas.

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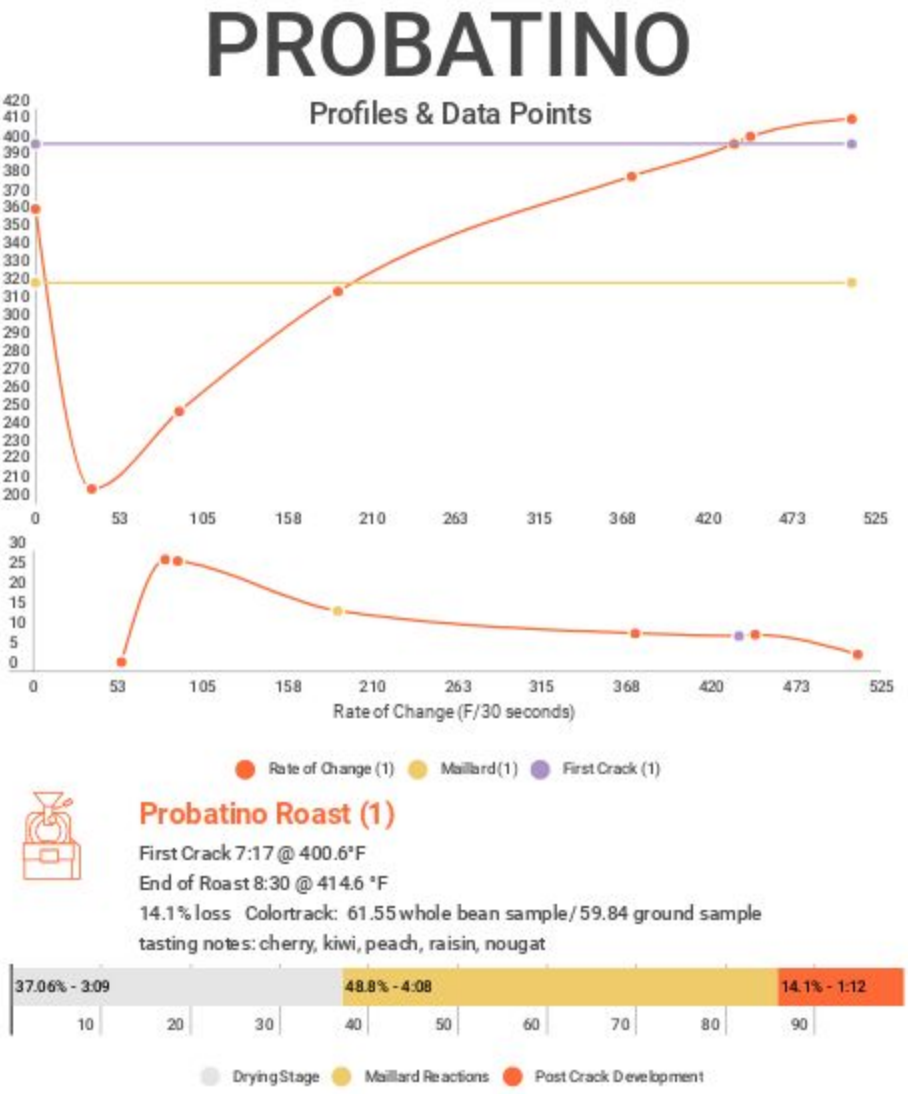
I lowered the heat 3 minutes into Maillard and again just after first crack. My rate of change was already under 10 °F every 30 seconds, so I knew my momentum was already trending low. Even though I was on course, I could have reduced the heat much sooner in the roast. This naturally processed coffee with its high water activity and low density, had already released most of its moisture in the beginning of the roast. First crack was late in the roast with a high temperature of 400.6°F (+5 degrees of the average roast) and the coffee took off quickly. After 1:12 minutes, the coffee had quickly increased 14°F degrees, bringing me to a medium roast level.

On the cupping table, there was still plenty of peach and tart kiwi balanced with some sweet raisin and nougat. I like naturals to have a bit more fruit punch in them and I think a lower end temperature with the same post crack development time would have done just that.



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Behmor Analysis by Evan Gilman

Unless otherwise noted, I follow a set standard of operations for all my Behmor roasts. Generally, I'll use the 1lb setting, manual mode (P5), full power, and high drum speed until crack. Read my original post and stats here.

My roast of this natural pacamara was anything but normal. With natural coffees, and particularly with cultivars like pacamara that have the reputation of being complex and herbal (even to the point of funkiness), my tendency is to pull out as much syrupy sweetness as possible while masking some of the savory notes that might come through.

My plan was to bring this coffee up to first crack, and slowly develop the sugars. I tried to mitigate the 'racing' that can sometimes happen with a large bean natural coffee like this one, and used P3 just as soon as I heard the first few pops of first crack. The smell up to this stage was a decidedly unique roasted olive fragrance. It reminded me (in a very pleasant way) of some of the better pizzas I've had in recent memory. But it was definitely herbal.

Perhaps I got a bit caught up in my pizza reverie, because this coffee proceeded to race through development faster than I had bargained for. After 1:25 of development, I pulled the coffee out and cooled manually. Make sure to clean the roaster thoroughly afterwards - this coffee is very chaffy.

Black tea and bitter notes came out on the cupping table, and I take full responsibility for the slight overdevelopment of this coffee. In the Aeropress cup, this coffee was quite agreeable, and some of the roastiness was masked. However, take note of this coffee's tendency to rush. With a careful roast, this coffee will be juicy, intensely complex, and satisfying.

Brew Analysis by Sandra Loofbourow

Dry processed coffees can be polarizing, with some cuppers revelling in the sweet jammy fruitiness of a well executed natural, while others recoil at the slightest hint of ferment. This coffee from Apaneca in El Salvador straddles that line artfully, with luscious tones of blackberry, plum, and grape balanced by a pleasant herbal and raisin note.

I first brewed Evan's Behmor roast as an Aeropress at a 1:12 ratio. He mentions in his analysis above that the coffee sped right through first crack, but the effect of the high end temperature on this cup was pretty minimal. There was tons of grape, hibiscus, and plum sweetness balanced by a full chocolate base and a hint of tobacco that I attributed to the roast. When rewed on V60 this profile became a little heavier, with lots of fig, chocolate, and herbal notes up front with a hint of nectarine and raisin to brighten it up.

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Jen's probat roast was a little more balanced on the V60, even giving hints of dried tropical fruits like banana as well as cranberry and luscious fruit jam. These fruit acids were still met with chocolate, but there was also some maple syrup and molasses that added to the complexity of the base notes.

Roast	Method	Grind (EK43)	Dose (g)	H20 (g)	Ratio	Preinfusion (g)	Preinfusion (s)	Time	TDS	Ext %
Behmor	Aeropress	6	18	225	1:12	-	-	1:34	1.58	20.91
Probat 1	V60	8.5	25	400	1:16	50	30	3:29	1.34	22.73
Behmor	V60	8.5	25	400	1:16	50	30	3:33	1.38	23.41